1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

family's crop, and this increases the likelihood of excessive indulgence in *nyuma* during the following year, and so on. In contrast, a family with sufficient *padi* reserves to enable it to dispense with premature reaping is strengthening its position, and increasing the probability of a surplus.

The Ngānjong ka Penyadai Ritual

140. Once the *mata ka padi* ritual has been performed, the reaping of *padi muda* (quick-ripening rices) and *padi pulut* (glutinous rices) is embarked upon as soon as they are judged to be in a sufficiently mature state. The commencement of the main harvest (i.e. of the *padi taun*) is signalized by an important ritual known as *nganjong ka penyadai*. A *penyadai* is a small plaited mat, or a piece of bark-cloth, usually about four feet square, which is placed in the centre of the growing *padi* as a resting place both for reaping baskets (*sintong*) and the larger containers (*lanji*) in which the panicles are carried back to the long-house (or *dampa*) for threshing. This mat does have the practical use that it catches any *padi* that is accidently spilt while being transferred from *sintong* to *lanji*, but its principal purpose is a ritual one. We have noted the attitude of extreme deference and respect which the Iban have towards their *padi*, and the *penyadai* is primarily a precinct or sanctum where the souls of the *padi* can foregather. The ritual begins with the burial of an offering (*piring*) for the spirits of the earth. The panicles of the nearby clumps of *padi* are then plucked, and the stalks bent over several times and pressed down onto the ground; one clump has a brass bangle placed about it and is then tied in a knot. At the same time an incantation is uttered aimed at immobilizing the soul of the *padi*, and so preventing it from wandering from the farm in question. On the top of these imprisoned clumps the mat or piece of bark-cloth is laid down, and pegged in place with omen-sticks. Further offerings are performed, and all the other *padi* spirits are invited to make use of the *penyadai*, and entreated to assemble there in due course (Plate 20). This part of the ritual complete, the women prepare a magical potion from a variety of hereditary charms, and scatter the fluid over the growing *padi* with the injunction that the crop be made easy to reap and prove to be an abundant one.

141. Following this inaugural ceremony only a few baskets of *padi* are gathered, and on the next day no-one goes to the farm—as a safeguard against bad omens, and a pause to let the magic take effect. On the third day the site is re-visited, and the *penyadai* is 'fed' (*nyape*) by having a small quantity of cooked rice (*asi*) smeared upon it. Thereafter, the normal routine of harvesting continues, but each morning one of the reapers goes first to the *penyadai* to 'feed' it, until it is finally moved for the reaping of the *padi pun*, or sacred rice.

Iban Methods of Reaping

142. With the Iban, reaping a farm is a slow and protracted operation, for each panicle is plucked separately by hand. On rare occasions (at rituals, for example) women sometimes gather in the *padi* with their bare fingers, but the stems are too tough for this to become a regular practice, and in ordinary day to day reaping a small hand-knife, or *ketap* is used. A *ketap* (they are specially forged by Iban men for their womenfolk) consists of a thin blade of iron, with a base of about 2½ inches curving in from each end to a cutting edge of some 2 inches in length, the width of the blade being about 1½ inches. This blade is set firmly in the centre of a piece of bamboo (3 ins. long × ½ in. diameter), and held in place by a primitive cotter-pin fashioned from a piece of wire. In reaping, the bamboo handle is held upright in the palm of the hand, with the blade protruding slightly

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as it were, unawares and with a minimum of shock or disturbance, and it is believed that if more drastic and unceremonious methods were introduced the *padi* spirit would be likely to flee to other farms, and that as a result, the crop would be a poor one. We shall encounter another manifestation of this attitude when discussing the Iban method of threshing.

145. In reaping then, a woman moves from clump to clump of *padi*, gathering in the panicles one by one, and tossing them, at intervals, into a wide-mouthed, squat basket (*sintong*), which is worn in front of her body and held in place by a waist-band of bark-cloth. A *sintong* (about 11 inches in diameter by 9 inches in depth) is strongly plaited from split *rotan* canes, and attached to the side worn next to the body are two small arches of cane. The waist-band of bark-cloth is always in the form of a loop, the ends being securely tied to one of the cane arches and the loop left free. When the *sintong* is put on, the loop end is passed around the back of the body and then thrust through the other cane arch, and held in place by a wooden toggle. It is thus possible to remove the basket quite easily as soon as it is full. In passing, it may be noted that should the waist-band of a *singtong* snap or give away during the course of reaping, this is viewed as a bad omen, and work—for that day—is immediately terminated. As soon as she has filled her *sintong* a woman takes it to the *penyadai*, where she empties it into a *lanji* (a large carrying basket); or she may return to the *langkau umai* (farm hut) and empty the *padi* onto a large *rotan* mat (*bidai*) in which, at nights, it is securely wrapped.

The Carrying In of the Padi

146. When sufficient *padi* has been accumulated it is carried back to the *dampa* by men of the family (Plate 17). For this purpose special carrying baskets, called *lanji*, are used. Made by males from split *rotan* canes, and measuring about 15 inches in diameter by up to 3 feet in depth, they have strong carrying straps of bark-cloth, and a head-band of the same material. Into these *lanji* the panicles are pressed down tightly, and when the basket is full, a further bundle—wrapped in bark-cloth—is often lashed on top. Many of the loaded *lanji* which I examined weighed 100 lbs.-120 lbs. and more. Carrying these heavy loads for a mile or two along rough tracks strewn with fallen trees, and down steep and slippery hill-sides is no light task, but it is one in which young men take a peculiar pride. The ability to carry heavy loads across broken country is admired by the Iban as a leading masculine attribute. Of one who excels at this pursuit it is said that he is "truly strong" ("*kring amat*")—a tribute which will bring a flush of pride to any young Iban's cheeks; and for outstanding performers a laudatory phrase or nickname (*julok*) is sometimes coined. Majin, a former member of Rumah Nyala, was given the *julok* of "*Kapal tanah*", or "Steamship of the Land"; and although, in 1950 Majin had been dead for five years, I was frequently told of his prowess. During the harvest young men regularly return to assist in the operation of *berangkut padi*, as this carrying in of the crop for threshing is called. With florid faces, suffused with sweat and strain, they climb to their *dampa* and, with a nonchalant air—that asserts how much heavier a load they could have managed if only they wanted to—drop their *lanji* before the waiting women and girls.

147. The first carrying in of the *padi* for threshing commonly takes place about three weeks to a month after the commencement of reaping, and it is marked by a special ritual (called *ngalu ka padi*), in which the *padi* is welcomed

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X 243 782 to its future home—the place where it is to be stored. The first man bearing a *lanji*, is greeted at the top of the entry-ladder by a woman clad in an ikat skirt (a gesture this in honour of the *padi*), and bearing a fresh egg and a bowl of *tuak* (rice beer). The egg is waved over the man and his *lanji* of *padi* in consecration and welcome. (Normally a fowl is used, but in this case the use of a fowl is interdicted, as its power of flight is symbolical of the possible 'flight' of the *padi* spirits, in response to the persistent invitations of other *bilek* families). *Tuak* is offered, a libation poured, and then the *padi* is carried onto the *ruai* of the *bilek* family concerned. On the *ruai* an offering (*piring*) is performed, and after the *lanji* have been emptied onto a large mat (*bidai*), the *piring* is placed amid the X 243 251 golden panicles, and a prayer is said in which the *padi* is welcomed to its home and entreated to miraculously increase quantity. To conclude, a brass gong is placed over the *piring*, and together with the *padi* it is securely enfolded in the 285 *bidai*. *Bidai*, a type of mat especially designed for handling *padi*, are woven, by men, on an upright loom from split *rotan* canes and strips of bark-cloth. They are thus extremely strong and yet very flexible. A *bidai* of average size measures about 12 ft. by 15 ft.; *padi* is enfolded within it, and the over-lapping ends of the *bidai* are then weighed down with small logs of wood. By this method the panicles are completely protected from rats and other animals, and at the same time the *bidai* can be very easily opened up to add more *padi*.

X 243 774 148. The ritual (*ngalu ka padi*) just mentioned is an important one is the estimation of the Iban, for they are persuaded that *padi* can miraculously increase or decrease in quantity after it has been reaped, just as it can in the fields. The operative belief here is that the *padi* has a spirit, and that the departure of this spirit may result in diminution of grain itself. This belief is sustained by the *padi* cult in general, by myths and by dreams, but the Iban do point to the fact that after threshing and winnowing, the *padi* (i.e. originally stored in panicle form) of different *bilek* families behaves in very different ways. Whereas in some cases there is a normal and expected decrease in quantity, in other cases the loss is much more marked. This, of course, does happen, for the *padi* of different farms is subjected to very diverse conditions, and widely varying degrees of infestation by insect pests; but this is not the explanation of the Iban. Their theory is a mystical one, and consequently they expend much time and trouble in pouring libations, presenting offerings and in casting magical potions over the panicles before they are enfolded in a *bidai*, which has been ritually fed (*nyape*) to ensure that it will not devour any of the *padi* it is designed to protect.

Threshing

X 243 149. The threshing (*tungko*, v.f. *nungko*) of the *padi* begins on the day following the *ngalu ka padi* ritual, or at any time thereafter which meets the convenience of the *bilek* family concerned. It normally takes place on the *ruai*, and both men and women participate. The *bidai* containing the panicles is opened out and surrounded with additional mats to avert any danger of grain falling beneath the house. To the low rafters of the *sadau* (loft), long strips of supple bark-cloth are tied. A man then takes a small stack of *padi* (usually about a bushel or so) from the main heap, and grasping a loose bark-cloth strap in each hand to gain support and purchase, he commences to tread the panicles (*tangkai*). The action is a vigorous one, the outer panicles being forced down on to the mat and kneaded with the bare soles of the feet. Then they are gathered up again with the instep and inner surface of the foot and ankle, to be trampled once more. In this

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Winnowing

243 155. In due course the remainder of the crop is threshed, and then, on a fine and settled day, the operation of winnowing is embarked upon. Mats (*tikai singang*) are laid down over the entire extent of the family *tanju* (open platform of *dampa* or long-house); the *bidai* is opened up and the *padi* transferred to a series of *baka*. A *baka* is a large, circular basket, plaited from split *rotan* canes, and especially designed for the handling of grain; they vary in capacity from about five to nine gallons, the standard size being a *baka* of one bushel, or *pasu*. When a *baka* has been filled it is hoisted on to the head, and carried out to the *tanju* where the winnowers are waiting. Leaning slightly forward the bearer tilts her basket and lets the *padi* pour in a steady stream on to the mats below. As soon as the *padi* begins to fall the women (either one, two or three of them), who are armed with winnowing-trays (*chapan*), wave these rapidly up and down creating a strong draught that drives to one side any empty husks (*ampa*), while those containing kernels drop to the mat beneath (Plate 18). (The term for pouring out the *padi* is *berayar*, while the fanning action is known as *puput*, v.f. *muput*). Gradually a heap of sound *padi* is formed. At intervals the refuse is gathered up and winnowed a second time by hand; i.e. actually in the winnowing tray (*chapan*). In this way the completely empty husks (*ampa raya*) are lost, while the partially filled husks (*ampa brat*), and the small proportion of sound *padi* which has been inadvertently included, is retained. This mixture of *ampa brat* and sound *padi* is termed *brauk*, and is usually reserved to be pounded and eaten during the immediately following days. (Some Iban store this *brauk* away and sell it, in due course, to Chinese traders. As *padi* is sold by bulk and not by weight, the Iban gain on the transaction. They vindicate themselves by saying that such a practice is but mild retaliation for the double-dealing of the Chinese).

156. Winnowing always results in a loss in bulk, and in some cases, when for example, the *padi* has been severely attacked by the rice bug and other insects, the shrinkage is considerable. From observations made at Rumah Nyala, I would make the general estimate that loss in bulk at winnowing from about 5% to 20% in the worst cases. A careful measurement of the yield of a test plot of 1/180th of an acre, showed a loss in bulk at winnowing of about 11%, and this was *padi* classed by the Iban as being of better than average quality. In discussing yields it is important, therefore, to state clearly whether the measurement was made before or after winnowing.

157. When the winnowing is over the heap of sound *padi* is raked out on the mats and allowed to lie in the heat of the sun. This treatment is designed to improve the storing qualities of the *padi*, and it is usual for the sunning to continue for at least several days. At nights the *padi* is enfolded in mats, and protected from the elements by stout roofing made from palm fronds. The *padi* is then carried back to the *ruai* to wait for the final operation of being stored away in the huge bark-bins which each family keeps in the loft (*sadau*) of its apartment.

The Storing of the Padi

158. The final storing away (*simpan*, v.f. *besimpan*) is an event of great importance, for the Iban believe that if the correct rituals are faithfully performed their *padi* will last longer, that it will not be used up so quickly as would otherwise be the case. They believe that the supernatural qualities of fertility and increase which are the special attributes of *padi* are still present after the grain has been reaped, threshed, winnowed and stored. Everything depends on taking the

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9. After the firing of the farms: the burn has been a bad one and to clear the land for sowing the farmer is gathering scattered branches and making bonfires of them. This operation is called *ngebak*. Photograph taken on 3rd October, 1949; Sungai Sut, Kapit District. 372

10. Dibbling taking place. The man is wearing a loin-cloth (*sirat*), the traditional garment of Iban males. Photograph taken on 15th October, 1949; Sungai Sut, Kapit District. 243X 291

11. An Iban woman sowing *padi*. The burn has been an exceedingly poor one, but the farmers have no recourse but to sow their *padi* amid the fallen timber that still covers the land. The woman is wearing a sun-hat (*tanggi*). Photograph taken on 3rd September, 1949; Sungai Saban, Ulu Sut, Kapit District.

12. A young Iban girl amid ripening *padi*; on another part of the farm reaping is already in progress. The stumps are those of virgin jungle (*kampong*), and beyond lie the hills of the Mujong. Photograph taken on 21st February, 1951; Sungai Sut, Kapit District. 243X

13. A young man setting a spear-trap (*peti*) at the edge of his farm to protect it from wild pigs. He is wearing a hand-woven jacket (*kelambi*). Photograph taken on 4th March, 1950; Sungai Sut, Kapit District. 224 291

14. A watch-house (*langkau umai*); with walls and roofing of bark, it is strategically placed in the centre of the farm. In the foreground young *padi* is springing up. Against the front wall of the hut a tying-frame (used in *kat* weaving) is leaning. Photograph taken on 21st February, 1951; Sungai Sut, Kapit District. 343 285

15. An Iban woman guarding her farm. The *padi* in the background—the second successive crop from virgin jungle—has already been reaped. Photograph taken on 20th February, 1951; Sungai Sut, Kapit District. 243X

16. Reaping in progress: the woman is gathering the panicles one by one and placing them in the reaping-basket (*sintong*) which is fastened about her waist. (The *padi* shown here is that of a test plot which gave a yield equivalent to 42·8 bushels per acre). Photograph taken on 24th April, 1950; Sungai Sut, Kapit District.

17. After reaping the *padi* is packed in large carrying baskets (*lanji*) and transported back to the *dampa* or long-house to be threshed. Photograph taken on 22nd April, 1950; Sungai Sut, Kapit District. 482 415

18. Winnowing taking place on the open platform (*tanju*) of a farm house (*dampa*). One woman pours the threshed grain from a basket (*baka*) while the other fans with a winnowing tray (*chapan*). Photograph taken on 12th April, 1950; Sungai Sut, Kapit District. 243X 415

19. A woman planting *sengkenyang*—magical plants which are believed to watch over and minister to the needs of the growing *padi*. They are planted close to the sacred rice (*padi pun*) in the centre of the farm. Photograph taken on 15th October, 1949; Sungai Sut, Kapit District. 243X

20. An old man and his daughter making an offering to the *padi* spirits (*antu padi*) during a *nganjong ka penyadai* ritual. This important ritual inaugurates the harvest. The offering (*piring*) can be seen resting on the ground between the two officiants. Photograph taken on 7th March, 1950; Sungai Sut, Kapit District. 782

21. In the reaping basket (*sintong*) which this young man is carrying is the seed (*benih*) of the sacred rice (*padi pun*) of his *bilek* family. Dressed in an *ikat* jacket, worn in honour of the sacred rice, he is taking part in a ritual to celebrate the conclusion of the harvest. Photograph taken on 20th May, 1950; Sungai Sut, Kapit District. 415 482 291

1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

p. 146 g

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Plate 13. Setting a spear-trap (*pĕti*) against wild pigs.

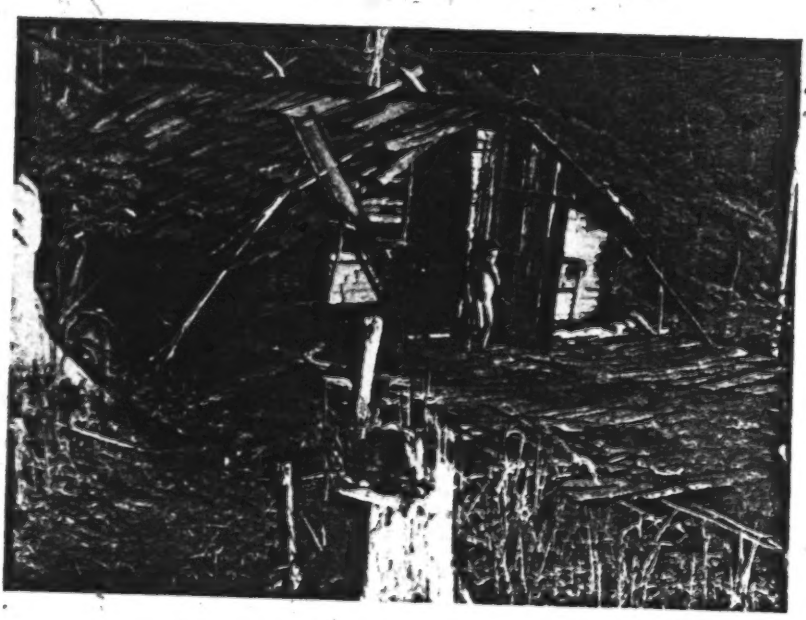

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Plate 14. A watch-house (*langkau umai*) built in the centre of a farm.

5: Roth E-4 (no date) 1892 CC6 Iban CC6

The *tempuan* or general thoroughfare is between the *bilich* and the *ruai*. It is three feet in width and is paved with wood. It is furnished with a ladder or notched stick by which to reach the loft, a family mortar where the women pound their paddy with wooden pestles to free it from the husk, and a pile or two of firewood reared by the men for use inside. This passage is also used by the women to winnow their rice in, feed their dogs, and attend to their chickens, and by the men to wash the dirt off their feet when they come home from their work. The wall of the *tempuan* is sometimes elaborately painted in various patterns, and the spears of the family are thrust into the skirting board so as to be handy.

The *ruai* or verandah is in front of the *tempuan* and is as nearly as possible the same size as the *bilich* from which it differs principally in being open on all sides and without any partition. It is therefore a cooler and more agreeable place and as such is frequented by both sexes for the purposes of conversation, discussion, and indoor pursuits. Female visitors are usually received in the *bilich*, but male visitors are invariably received in the *ruai* and only enter the bilich when invited to do so to be introduced to the women and to share the meals. They sleep in the *ruai* along with the boys and bachelors, and sit there all day when they have nothing better to do, conversing with the head of the family and chewing betel. The floor is carpeted with thick and heavy mats of cane interlaced with narrow strips of beaten bark. Over these are spread other mats of thinner and finer texture. There is a small fireplace between this and the next *ruai* for the men to warm themselves at when they get up, as they usually do, in the chill of the morning, before the sun has risen above the trees; the fire is allowed to go out in the middle of the day, but is revived towards the evening when it is getting dark, but still too early to light the torches.

Some *ruais* are provided with a *panggan* or bedstead with plank sides in one corner of the room for the men to sleep in, but this is not always the case. If the head of the family has made it for his own use and if he be a chief or rich man he will fix his gongs of various kinds around it for the sake of show; his weapons will be within reach and his war dress will hang from the roof where it can be seen to best advantage —a skull cap of wickerwork with its nodding plumes, and a skin jacket decorated with the tail feathers of the war bird of the tribe. But the most valuable ornament in the *ruai* by far is

quarter with rice and fill up with water and when it simmers cover it with leaves. Before the arrival of Europeans the Dyaks used earthen *pricus* made by themselves."

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

285- Mats are made either with split cane or from the outer bark of reeds. The women are very clever at plaiting, and some of their mats have beautiful designs.

They also make baskets of different sizes and shapes, some of which have coloured designs worked into them.

224 Hunting is with the Dyaks an occasional pursuit. They live upon a vegetable rather than upon an animal diet. But in a Dyak house there are generally to be found one or two men who go out hunting for wild pig or deer on any days when they are free from their usual farm work.

[231] The Dyak dogs are small and tawny in colour, and sagacious and clever in the jungle.

Native hunting with good dogs is easy work. The master loiters about, and the dogs beat the jungle for themselves. When they have found a scent, they give tongue, and soon run the animal to bay. The master knows from the peculiar bark of the dogs if they are keeping some animal at bay, and follows them and spears the game. The boars are fierce and dangerous when wounded, and turn furiously on the hunter, who often has to climb a tree to escape from their tusks. The dogs are very useful, and by attacking the hind legs of the animal keep making it turn round.

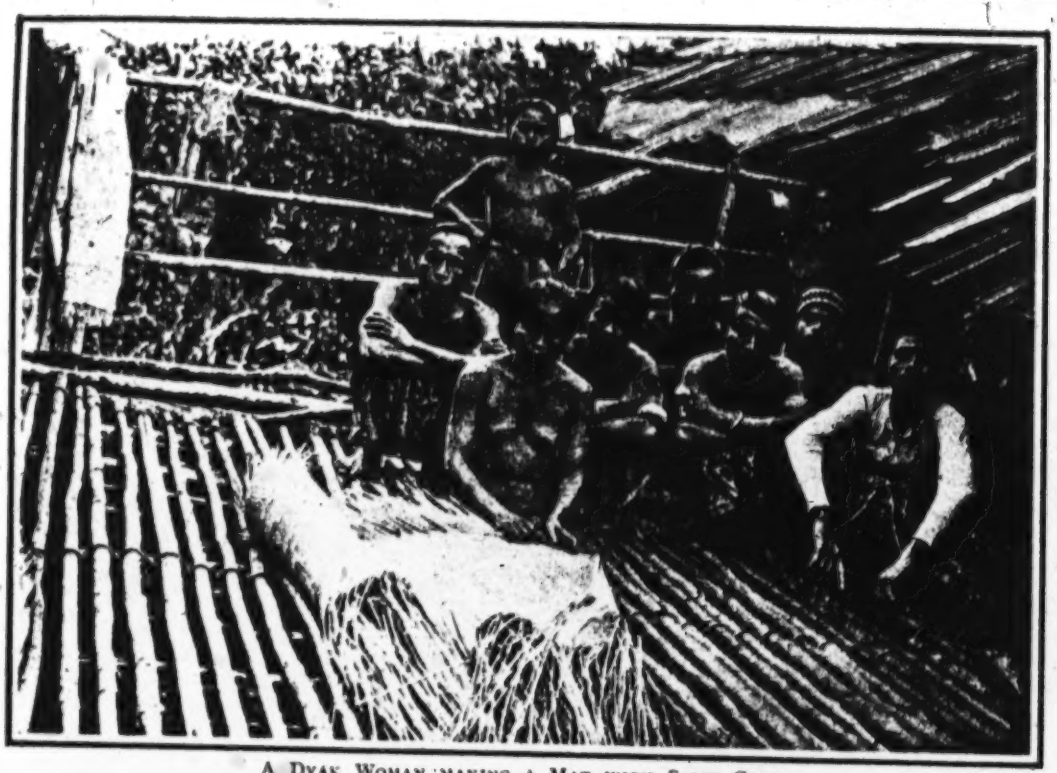
Deer are more easily run down than pigs, because they have not the strength to go any great distance, especially in the hot weather.

A favourite way of catching deer is to send a man to follow the spoor of a deer, and to find out where it lies to rest during the heat of the day. Then large nets made of fine cane are hung around, and the deer is driven into these by a large number of men, women, and boys making a noise. When the deer is caught in the net, he is soon killed.

A variety of traps are made by the Dyaks to catch

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

[Facing p. 62]



A DYAK WOMAN MAKING A MAT WITH SPLIT CANE

She is seated on the outside open veranda of the Dyak house. The flooring in the picture is made of the round trunks of small trees, and these are tied down with cane. Sometimes the flooring is made of split palm or split bamboos, but more often of laths of *bilian* or ironwood, so as to stand exposure to the weather. The outside uncovered veranda is a favourite place to sit in in the cool of the evening.

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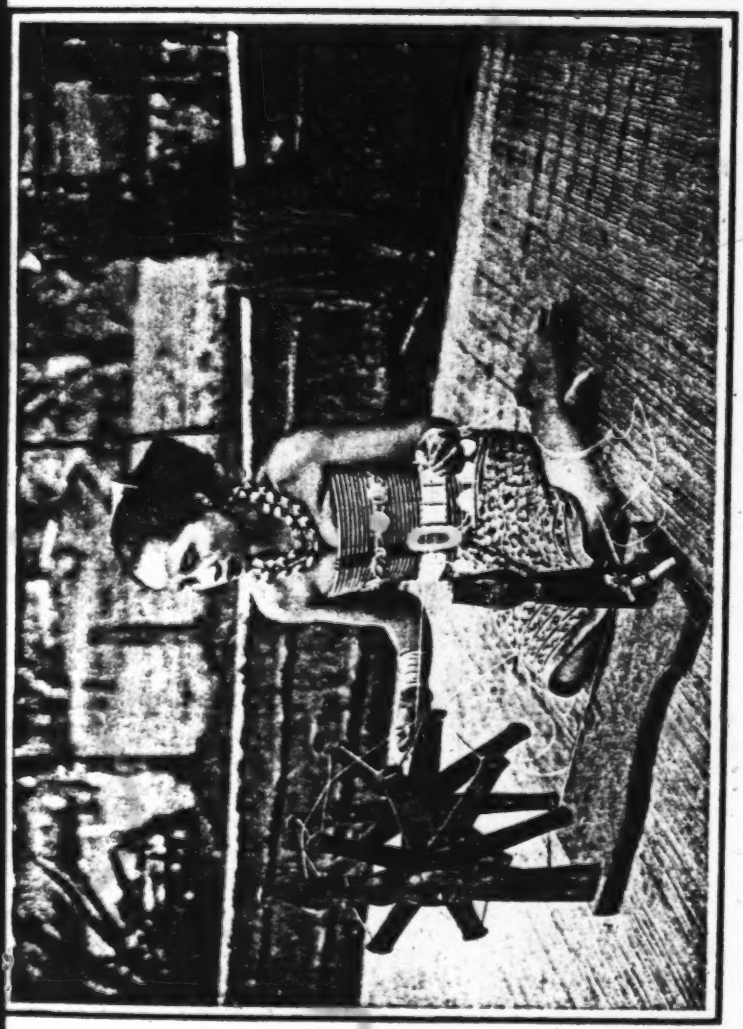
7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6



DYAK GIRL SPINNING

She is seated on a mat, in a characteristic attitude, and is making yarn out of the cotton, using a primitive spinning-wheel.

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[FACING p. 128]

ll:Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1957 OC6 Iban OC6

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317
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415
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(1) The gathering of the clay (Iban pot-making)

301
323
415
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342
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(2) Clay being laid out in the sun (Iban pot-making)

[p. 156a]

11:Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1957 OC6 Iban OC6

Plate XIII

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(1) Dried and pounded clay being sieved

(2) Sieved clay being mixed with water prior to kneading

[p. 156 b]

11:Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1957 ©C6 Iban OC6

with small stones) the process was a slow one: to collect about one *gantang* (gallon) of useable clay took 45 minutes. This amount, said Demai, would be enough for about five or six pots.

When we arrived back at the long-house Runin was busily occupied putting cotton on to a tying-frame (*tangga ajan*)—one of the most complicated processes in the technique of *ikat* weaving. Unable to attend to the task herself she instructed Demai to go on with the next stage in the handling of the clay: the sunning of it. Demai took a small mat (of the kind known as *tikai sengang*) and laid it out on that section of the *tanju*, or open platform of the long-house that belonged to Runin's apartment. Then, from the pile of clay she had collected in her basket she broke off small lumps—each about the size of a hen's egg—and laid them in rows on the mat. (Plate 2). It was by now mid-day. For the rest of that day and during the following morning the pieces of clay were left out in the full heat of the sun. The purpose of this, said Runin, was to dry the clay thoroughly, ready for the next process of pounding and sieving.

The clay laid out to sun, we returned with Demai to Runin's apartment. Soon after we had sat down Mut, aged 18, the son of Runin's deceased sister Giram and a member of Runin's *bilek* family, strode in. He had in his hands several cobs of corn (*Zea mays*) which, so it appeared, he was intending to roast in the embers of the fire that was burning on the family hearth. Drying on a rack above this hearth were the two pots that Runin had made the previous day. As soon as she realized what he was about Runin called to him in an agitated voice to go to some other apartment to roast his corn, giving as her reason: *"Takut priok aku blah"* ("For fear that my earthenware pots should burst.") Mut gave a grin of understanding and at once left—carrying his corn. Here we have another prohibition (*pemali lingkau*) closely resembling that already mentioned. When corn is roasted those seeds which are exposed to the full heat of the fire often explode with distinctly audible 'pops.' It is the belief of the Iban that corn roasted in this way in close proximity to unfired clay pots may result in those pots exploding when in due course they come to be fired. Similarly, there is a prohibition (*pemali getah*) against the use of damar gum in the vicinity of partially completed pots for the same reason that damar—an ancient form of illumination among the Iban—splutters and explodes as it burns.

243 On the final day of harvest a small section of the field is
788 reserved for cutting the next morning. On that last morning the family workers early take an offering to the final stand of rice, and after a prayer to the rice soul to go with them, the last panicles are cut and carefully covered with a piece of cloth. This ritual, Ngelechut ka Padi, is performed to insure that the semengát padi will return to the longhouse with the rice, and not be left in the ground.

243 The newly harvested rice is stored temporarily in the langkau or,
[178] if the house is close by, carried immediately to the longhouse. Although
[285] the traditional carrying basket (lanji') is still used for transporting the rice, it rapidly is giving way to gunny-sacks (guni) which have the advantages of being cheap (M$.40 each), taking no time to make as the baskets do, and being useful for storing rice in excess to space available in the bark-bins (tibang).

After the padi has been received ceremonially into the house,
243 574 preparations are made for threshing (tungku', v.f., nungku'). On the day that the threshing begins, the family serves rice cakes, drinks and whatever other food they may be able to furnish. All members of the community are invited (dipadah ka) and a festive air fills the house.

The padi is emptied from the lanji' or guni into a heap on the
243 285 ruai, from which about a bushel at a time is taken and placed onto a tikai senggang, a mat made of large fibers and proscribed for any activity

243 other than that of threshing the padi. When I asked on several occasions
285 whether the tikai senggang could be used for any other purpose, the Ibans replied emphatically that it could not, for it would offend the samengat padi.

> ". . . Grasping a loose bark-cloth strap in each hand to gain support and purchase, (the thresher) commences to tread the panicles (tangkai). The action is a vigorous one, the outer panicles being forced down on to the mat and kneaded with the bare soles of the feet. They are gathered up again with the instep and inner surface of the foot and ankle, to be trampled once more. In this way the grain (still in the hull, of course) is gradually separated from the branches of the panicles. The first treading of a bushel of panicles takes about seven to nine minutes - the time varying with the degree of ripeness at reaping."

462 Threshing is usually done by men, although in the absence of
476 male workers women do it. If labor-exchange has been arranged for other activities, such as planting and weeding, it is usual for the group to continue through together and to share in threshing.

After the first threshing, in which many grains are loosened, women squatting to the sides of the tikai senggang lift the panicles (now called ruman) and sift any free grains through their fingers onto the mat. The panicles then are gathered up again for a second threshing by foot.

243 Although the Ibans are aware of and acknowledge the quicker
177 methods of the Chinese who harvest padi with a long-knife, grasping a
178 dozen or more stalks at once and cutting them off about 15 inches from

243 the panicles, then flailing the heads over the boards of a specially
177 constructed container, they say that they dare not follow these techni-
178 ques which they consider coarse (kasar) for fear that they would offend the semengat padi.

As the padi is threshed, it is spread on a bidai, a large mat
243 used especailly for drying (kerekai) the padi on the family's tanju'.
251 The padi is poured onto the bidai and raked with a wooden-bladed rake to
285 a depth of about one inch. Lengths of bamboo or thin saplings up to twelve feet long are extended from the windows opening onto the tanju' so that hungary chickens can be driven away by a swing of the bamboo or wood. Ideally, the padi will be dried for a full day to assure that it will not turn moldy (bekuap) in storage. The first drops of a shower send men and women alike scurrying to cover the padi or to bring it into the house in case of a hard rain.

243 After the padi is dried, it is returned to the ruai and covered by folding the corners of the bidai over it. On a hot and windless day, the padi is winnowed. The bidai is opened and the padi transferred to a series of baka', circular baskets made of plaited rattan averaging about one bushel in capacity. The baka' full of padi are taken one by one to the tanju' where the winnowing is done. The bearer tilts the baka' slightly allowing a steady stream of padi to pour over the lip into the
462 tikai senggang which have been spread to receive the padi. As one person pours (berayar) the padi, one to three women fan (muput) winnowing-

TABLE 16

243 461 462 Division of Labor and Man-Days per Acre

Types of Work	Men	Women	Man-Days
Preparing the seed-bed	X	X	1
Clearing and burning	X	X	7
Cultivating the soil	X	X	14
Building Farmhouse	X		2
Transplanting	x	X	7
Weeding and fertilizing		X	14
[285] Weaving mats, winnowing baskets and seed baskets		X	2
Harvesting and transporting	X	X	17
Threshing	X	X	2
Drying		X	2
Winnowing		X	1
Storage	x	X	1
	Total No. Man-Days:		70

x = minor role
X = major role

243 435 465 Calculating on the basis of the going price of M$2.20 per gantang (six catties) for Iban rice in the pasar, the total value per average acre was M$304.15, making the rate of return about M$ .43 per hour invested in padi cultivation.

314 Melanus who manufacture sago flour (cf. Morris, 1964). Sago palms are
231 held by Iban families under customary rights. The trunk of the palm is
423 sawed into 30 inch lengths, split and rasped (diparut) for pig fodder.
262 Sago also is eaten as a rice substitute when the rice supply is exhausted
342 and Ibans have no money with which to buy more.[20] In the Middle Rejang and its tributaries, where the nipa palm does not grow, the leaves of
757 the sago palm (daun mulong) are used for thatching and coverings. The sago nut (buah mulong) is a part of Iban pharmacology, being highly astringent and used in the treatment of diarrhea.

285 Numerous reeds grow both in low-lying and higher land, and are
314 collected for the manufacture of mats and baskets by women. The reeds
462 (ui, purun, bemban) are cut and taken to the longhouse where they are
412 alternately dried and soaked until the outer covering (kulit) can be cut away (disimu', dilit) with a sharp, long-handled knife (lungga). The species bemban is the most valuable because it requires great attention in preparation for weaving. It is exposed to dew (diperambun) for five to seven nights in order to achieve the prized lightness of color. If rain falls the bemban is quickly retrieved by the women for rain will blacken the bemban. The weaving of baskets and mats is done by women on the longhouse ruai or covered common verandah. In addition to the

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[20] A period that is described colorfully but dreadfully as maya bulan gantong sendok, "when the rice-ladle hangs (empty over the pot)."

In addition to the
285 continuous demand of the Ibans themselves for mats and baskets, the
[432] former for covering the floors when sitting, for containing the newly harvested rice and for threshing, the latter for containers for seed, harvested rice, fish and jungle produce, among other uses, they also are manufactured for sale in Sibu.[21]

222 Other jungle produce of commercial value includes a wide variety
432 of vegetables. Ibans living in the Sungai Sunga and Sungai Assan area
443 collect edible ferns each evening and bring the ferns (the most common are paku' and kemiding) bound in pineapple leaves (daun nanas) to market in the early morning. Kangkong, a leafy vegetable not unlike spinach, is plucked and sold regularly. Less regularly, Ibans bring in bamboo shoots (tubu') and the cabbages of several species of palms such as the sago (upa' mulong), upa' pantu', upa' maram, upa' apong, upa' lalis and upa' bindang.

Fishing

226 Exploitation of aquatic life provides the principal source of
[262] protein in the Iban diet. Fish, shrimps and snails are caught or trapped in the numerous streams. Various types of worms and slugs are obtained

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[484] [21] The sale of mats and baskets affords an opportunity for Iban women to visit the Sibu pasar or, occasionally, to travel as far as Sarikei, where they rationalize the prices are better - and the cost of
[191] travel thrice that to Sibu! The availability of plastics is being exploited by Iban women who weave brightly colored baskets of plastic and sell them from door to door or to local shops.